



Success Story

**U.S. Small Business Administration
North Carolina District Office**

Contact: Mike Ernandes
Marketing & Outreach Specialist
(704) 344-6588

WILLIAMS LIFESKILLS – DURHAM, NC

SBA SBIR Grants assist company to develop Training Program

Williams LifeSkills (WLS) was founded in 1996 by Redford Williams, M.D. and Virginia Williams, PhD to build upon the mind/body research of Redford Williams showing the connections between physical disease and emotional states and personality traits. The basic goal was to train individuals to learn to behave in effective ways to improve their physical and mental health, well being, relationships and work effectiveness. The company began by offering a face-to-face workshop which has been given to a number of corporations and government agencies. It has also been given as a part of cardiac rehabilitation, with very positive results.

In 1998, LifeSkills was awarded its first SBA Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) grant of \$100,000 through the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) to develop a TV-quality 70-minute video to standardize training in these skills and to train far larger numbers of individuals. WLS is finishing up a clinical trial of this video which includes groups that use the video alone and the video with a work book. While this study is taking place the video is being sold through vendors, on their website, <http://www.williamslifeskills.com>.

In 2001, a second SBIR grant was awarded which is helping the firm complete a study to how the program can be used to reduce elevated blood pressure. Employees in a large hospital were screened for elevated pressure and went through the LifeSkills workshop and video. The study from 2001-2004 is in its final stages.

“The grant was extremely helpful to us in developing our product,” said Dr. Virginia Williams, “Other potential opportunities include working with caregivers of those with Alzheimer’s disease, being part of drug rehabilitation programs, and being part of the support system for college athletics.”

SBIR is a highly competitive program that encourages small business to explore their technological potential and provides the incentive to profit from its commercialization. By including qualified small businesses in the nation's R&D arena, high-tech innovation is stimulated and the United States gains entrepreneurial spirit as it meets its specific research and development needs.

--more --

Since its enactment in 1982, as part of the Small Business Innovation Development Act, SBIR has helped thousands of small businesses to compete for federal research and development awards. Their contributions have enhanced the nation's defense, protected our environment, advanced health care, and improved our ability to manage information and manipulate data.

Each year, ten federal departments and agencies are required by SBIR to reserve a portion of their R&D funds for award to small business. Among them are: Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense and the Environmental Protection Agency. For more information about the SBIR program, visit <http://www.sba.gov/sbir>.

The NC Small Business & Technology Development Center (SBTDC) offers SBIR assistance among it's variety of programs for small businesses. Visit: <http://www.sbtcd.org>.

For more information on Williams LifeSkills contact Virginia Williams at (919) 286-4566

#



Virginia Williams, PhD
President



Redford B Williams, MD
Chairman of the Board